

'Mediating and Consuming Memories of Violence - The Jabidah Massacre in the Philippines' by Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied and Rommel A. Curaming Critical Asian Studies

In this paper Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied (Malay Studies) and his co-author examine how different representations and interpretations of the 1968 Jabidah Massacre reflect ongoing tensions in the Philippines.

Considered by many as the founding moment of Muslim separatism in Mindanao, the Jabidah massacre, which took place on Corregidor Island, involved the killing of Muslim trainees who were being prepared by the Philippine military in 1967 and 1968 to infiltrate and sabotage neighboring Sabah. This article analyzes the ways by which memories of this iconic event have in the past four decades been recorded, remembered, mythicized, appropriated, or simply consumed for their own purposes by political elites, civil society actors, and ordinary people in the Philippines. The angle of vision is directed toward what is termed "contentious vectors" – news media, novels, films, and blogs – to analyze the processes by which memories are recast. The ways by which the Jabidah massacre is remembered and appropriated reflect the contestations between civil society and the government in the Philippines, as well as the intense rivalry among the political elites both within and between the Christian-elite-dominated Filipino polity and Muslim communities. The struggle to influence the shape of memories of Jabidah is part and parcel of an ongoing struggle to create competing 'nations-of-intent' amidst the persistent tensions between the state and its dissenters.

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